

Drug Court



Is Now in Session

"Hello, Ginger."
"Howdy, Judge."

Not your typical response to a summons from the judge, but this isn't your typical court either. This is the start of another weekly session of Drug Court, a special part of Christian District and Circuit Court set aside to monitor the treatment progress of selected adult and juvenile drug offenders.

"This is one of the best things we've done in the court system," Judge Edwin White says. "Our goal is help these people get the help they need, and without Pennyroyal Center, that goal could not be achieved."

Pennyroyal Center plays a key role in this new court by providing the intensive outpatient treatment for court participants. Director for Substance Abuse, Dr. Sabrina Grubbs says, "Several people have made positive changes in their lives because of drug court, but it's not easy."

Dr. Grubbs explains that most intensive outpatient programs are offered for six to nine weeks. The Drug Court program is different. "We've set this up in three phases," she says. "The first phase takes eight weeks to complete and includes seven hours a week of group and individual therapy. The second phase reduces the amount of time each week, but still involves group and individual sessions."

No one has reached the third phase of treatment at this point. "Because this is a new program, it is undergoing constant evaluation and evolution," Dr. Grubbs says. "For instance, we have found that people do well under Phase 1, but some have relapses when they enter the less intensive phase."

To help keep the program moving forward, the judges, court staff and treatment team members meet each week to review progress and to work on improvements. "This court has the potential of becoming as big as the criminal session of Circuit Court," Judge White says.

Dr. Grubbs agrees. While each Drug Court is limited to 15 participants, Dr. Grubbs sees that number growing very quickly. In fact, a new Drug Court is being planned for Muhlenberg County. "The case load is there," Dr. Grubbs says. "Now it's just a matter of getting the staff in place to get the court open for business."

Court Notes

Christian County Drug Court sessions started in March.

Juvenile and adult participants are selected by court designated workers.

Treatment sessions are conducted in three phases which include group and individual therapy.

Efforts are currently underway to start a Drug Court in Muhlenberg County.



Circuit Judge John Atkins listens to Drug Court participant.

Substance Abuse Services

Substance Abuse Service Visits

	<u>FY 00</u>	<u>FY 01</u>
DUI Assessment/Treatment	9,262	10,456
Phoenix Recovery Center	9,747	9,551
Intensive Outpatient Treatment	782	1,375
Substance Abuse Case Management	1,211	892
Substance Abuse Prevention	1,373	762